

Agenda Report

June 20, 2016

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Department of Public Works
SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT GRANT APPLICATION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT MITIGATION PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the tree plantings proposed herein are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304(b) (Minor Alterations to Land—New Landscaping); and
2. Adopt a resolution authorizing submittal of a grant application to the Environmental Enhancement Mitigation Program for the planting of trees at various locations along City streets, City parks and City facilities.

BACKGROUND:

The California Natural Resources Agency is accepting applications for the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM) Program 2015-2016 grant cycle. The EEM Program was established by the Legislature in 1989 and amended on September 26, 2013. It offers \$7 million each fiscal year for grants to state, local, federal and nonprofit organizations.

Eligible projects must be directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of the modification of an existing transportation facility or construction of a new transportation facility. Through the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) grant program, the Natural Resources Agency awards and administers funding for forestry projects designed to offset vehicular emissions of carbon dioxide through the planting of trees and other suitable plants. As a part of the 710 freeway mitigation projects, the Department of Public Works widened Raymond Avenue and added other improvements directing vehicular traffic onto Raymond Avenue rather than to residential streets.

The Department of Public Works is requesting \$480,000 in funding to offset increased emissions by planting trees in parkways, parks and by facilities throughout the City. The Department of Public Works Parks and Natural Resources Division have been

awarded these funds 14 times since the inception of the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program grant in 1990.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program grant application is consistent with the City Council's strategic goals to improve, maintain and enhance public facilities and infrastructure, support and promote the quality of life and local economy, and ensure public safety. The application is also consistent with the Green City Action Plan, Action 18 to improve air quality.

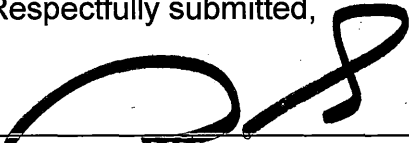
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The planting of trees in parks, on public streets, and City facilities is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land), and specifically subsection (b) (New Landscaping).

FISCAL IMPACT:

The City has the potential to gain \$480,000 to enhance the urban forest through the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program grant. There is no matching funds requirement for this grant program. If the grant is awarded, the Department of Public Works will return to Council to appropriate the funds to the proper budget accounts.

Respectfully submitted,



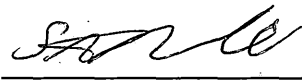
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